



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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SERIOUS RED SALMON PROBLEM IN ALASKA RECEIVES SPECIAL ATTENTION

Assistant Secretary of the Interior Ross Leffler announced today that priority attention is being given to a serious problem developing in the red salmon fisheries of the Bristol Bay area of Alaska.

Biologists of the Fish and Wildlife Service working on Alaskan problems have informed him, the Assistant Secretary said, that increasingly heavy Japanese operations in newly developed fishing areas in the central north Pacific and Bering Sea are affecting the red salmon runs of Bristol Bay.

The Bristol Bay runs of red salmon are expected to be small during 1958. The Bureau of Commercial Fisheries has advised the Assistant Secretary that despite already stringent regulations now in effect it may be necessary to prohibit fishing entirely in Bristol Bay. This action will be necessary in order to achieve even a minimal escapement of spawning salmon during the coming year unless the high seas fishery is substantially reduced in areas where salmon of North American origin concentrate.

Mr. Leffler declared that the Department of the Interior is vitally concerned over the Bristol Bay situation because of the effect it will have on the Department's current efforts to maintain and improve the Alaska salmon runs. Concern over the Bristol Bay situation has been expressed widely within the salmon industry, and particular attention was given this subject at a meeting of the Department's Advisory Committee on Fish and Wildlife in Washington on November 14 and 15.

The Department of the Interior is in contact with officials of the Department of State and active attention is being given this problem by both Departments.

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